

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-08 /095 W

-----115180 151307Z /46

R 141616Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 722

INFO AMEMBASSY BANQUI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GB

SUBJECT: TENTH ANNIVERSARY, RENOVATION DAY

REF: LIBREVILLE 159

1. GABON CELEBRATED TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF RENOVATION DAY, WHICH HAS NOW BECOME GABON'S MOST IMPORTANT DAY, WITH MODERATE ENTHUSIASM. THREE DAY HOLIDAY (MARCH 11-13) WAS DECLARED AND LIBREVILLE VIRTUALLY SHUT DOWN DURING PERIOD. BY AND LARGE SCHEDULED EVENTS WENT OFF SMOOTHLY. HIGHLIGHT WAS SIX AND HALF HOUR PARADE MARCH 12 FEATURING MILITARY, PARTY CADRES AND WIDE VARIETY OF SCHOOLS. PRESIDENT BONGO ADDRESSED NATION AT LIBREVILLE STADIUM MARCH 11 (SEPTEL), BUT FOR MOST PART, DELIVERY WAS LOW KEY. SUBSTANCE OF SPEECH BROKE LITTLE NEW GROUND. SPECIAL EVENT WAS UNVEILING OF STATUE OF BONGO CONSTRUCTED BY NORTH KOREANS (WHO WERE SUBSEQUENTLY DECORATED).

2. SPECIAL DELEGATIONS CAME FROM NUMBER OF COUNTRIES (MOSTLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AFRICAN) BUT ALSO INCLUDING JOURNIAC, GISCARD'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT. ONLY ONE CHIEF OF STATE, EMPEROR BOKASSA, EVENTUALLY TURNED UP ALTHOUGH AS LATE AS MARCH 6, GOG WAS EXPECTING AT LEAST THREE INCLUDING MOBUTU WHO CANCELLED MARCH 9 OR 10 AND SENT HIS PRIME MINISTER INSTEAD, AND TOGO'S EYADEMA, WHO SIMPLY DIDN'T SHOW (EVEN HIS AMBASSADOR HERE DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER HE WAS COMING AS LATE AS MARCH 11). NO LIST OF THOSE WHO

ATTENDED IN ANY CASE WAS DISTRIBUTED.

3. ALL IN ALL, ATMOSPHERE WAS SOMEWHAT RESTRAINED AND CLEARLY
INDICATIVE THAT ORDER AND PEACE REIGNED IN GABON. NO INCIDENTS
WERE REPORTED AND BONGO WAS UNDOUBTEDLY PLEASED WITH WHOLE
SHOW. TIENKEN

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